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The purpose of this study was to investigate the reasons that made WordPress a successful weblog publishing system and winning the battle against Movable Type. A detailed comparison was conducted in three main areas: Ease of Use, Programming Language, and the Ecosystem. Results indicated that the simplicity of using WordPress in terms of system installation, content management and maintenance are the top reasons that users choose WordPress instead of Movable Type. Choosing Perl as the programming language also made Movable Type difficult to use because of the long learning curve. Although Movable Type was started years before WordPress, it lacks openness as an open source system, and does not have enough support from its community. The results of this study could provide insights for open source community contributors and Content Management System (CMS) users to better maintain and use open source technologies.

Headings:

      Content Management System

      Open Source Software

      WordPress

      Movable Type

A COMPARISON OF WORDPRESS AND MOVABLE TYPE:
TWO MAIN OPEN SOURCE CONTENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

by
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Approved by:

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Introduction

Content Management Systems (CMS) nowadays are mainly used to manage complex publications on the web. Wikipedia defined it as "the collection of procedures used to manage work flow in a collaborative environment". CMS separates content, presentation, and workflow management from each other. In a CMS, data can be defined as documents, movies, pictures, etc. CMSs are frequently used for storing, controlling, revising, semantically enriching, and publishing documentations [1].

WordPress is an open source CMS that is often used as a blog publishing application, and has the largest user base of any self-hosted blogging tool. Users can set up a blog on WordPress.com or on a self-hosted server. In the past, the user base of WordPress has been steadily growing and it probably is the most popular blogging platform on the web.

This popularity of WordPress is due to a number of factors, most notably its ease of use, and customization. Installation of the software takes just minutes and a blogger with very little technical background can set it up and get it running in very little time. Once installed, WordPress offers a huge amount of customization options from the default modifications to custom themes and plugins.

The objective of this paper is to analyze and identify possible reasons that made WordPress a successful weblog publishing system, and why Movable Type is losing the

battle against WordPress. To accomplish this objective, a detailed comparison between WordPress and Movable Type was conducted in three main areas: Ease of Use, Programming Language, and the Ecosystem.

Literature Review

Open Source Software vs. Proprietary Software

"The term '*open source*' describes practices in production and development that promote access to the end product's source materials"[2]. Lots of phrases have been used to describe the concept of "open source" before the community adopted this term, and the rise of the Internet, and the need of adjusting and reusing the source code helped "open source" to get accepted.

"Open source" should not be confused with another term, "free software", and they are not synonymous. Normally free software refers to the price of the software. For example, Google's Gmail is an example of a free, closed source application. However, open source is a matter of users' freedom to run, copy, distribute, study, change, and improve the software. More precisely, it refers to four types of freedom, for the users of the software [3]:

1) The freedom to run the program, for any purpose;

2) The freedom to study how the program works, and adapt it to your needs (Access to the source code is a precondition for this);

3) The freedom to redistribute copies so you can help your neighbor;

4) The freedom to improve the program, and release your improvements to the public, so that the whole community benefits (Access to the source code is a precondition for this).

In contrast, proprietary software is licensed under exclusive legal right of the copyright holder. The licensee is given the right to use the software under certain conditions, but restricted from other uses, such as modification, further distribution, or reverse engineering [4]. In other words, proprietary software is closed-source, therefore the source code of application is not released to the users. For example, Microsoft, which owns and develops Windows and Microsoft Office, has been proponents of this business model.

Many free open source systems such as WordPress are released under GNU's General Public License (GPL), which is intended to guarantee the freedom to share and change all versions of a program, and to make sure it remains free software for all its users. GPL also allows any user to modify or redistribute the source code and all derivative works.

Open source and proprietary content management systems both have advantages and disadvantages. Open source content management systems are free in many ways. People can do all they need to do with the product and the code behind it, such as customization and integration with other systems. Users do not need to spend a lot of time in implementing and maintaining the system. Furthermore, there is no license fee. Anyone can download and install an open source CMS on a web server without any cost. However, open source application is maintained by the open source community, therefore the source code is more likely to be buggy and have security flaws. The products'

survival relies on the strength of the user community and dedication of the developers. On the other hand, proprietary CMSs are created, distributed, and maintained by a business, which often carries more premium features, and provides guaranteed support from the original developers. The drawbacks of proprietary CMS are that it requires a commercial license that can be very expensive, and the source code is restricted in usage and not accessible to wide audiences. Website designers and administrators have to evaluate these tradeoffs and make a decision before taking any further steps.

Overview of Content Management Systems

The practice of creating websites requires writing multiple HTML pages that contain both content and design elements. HTML (HyperText Markup Language) is the main markup language for creating web pages，and is the basic building-blocks of websites. HTML is written in the form of HTML elements consisting of tags. Web browsers read HTML documents and translate them into visual or audible Web pages without displaying the HTML tags, but use these tags to interpret the content of the page. Besides HTML, CSS (Cascading Style Sheets) is also used in designing websites. CSS is designed primarily to enable the separation of document content written in HTML from document presentation. A HTML document is linked to a style sheet, which is imported as a CSS document. The information about the web page layouts, colors, and fonts is encapsulated in the CSS document [5].

While CSS makes the separation of content and style possible, a content management system could make building and maintaining websites much faster and easier. Without a

CMS, for example, if designers want to post some news and need to show them in two different pages on the website, they have to do the same job twice to add these contents in two places. Using a CMS, on the other hand, they only need to post the news once, and any other staff members can create and maintain this website regardless of their technical expertise. CMS allows a news publisher to update pages without modifying any code.

Content management systems use scripting languages such as PHP, Perl, or Ruby to fuse the CSS, HTML, and backend database together. A lot of website features, such as cloud tags, event calendar, and related post links, can be implemented by adding plugins, therefore website designers do not need to design and develop these features by themselves. What the designers or developers need to do is to just download the plugins from the community, then upload them to the CMS in the administration panel. It makes building and maintaining websites a much easier job. The system can then pull the content out and show it on appropriate pages based on the rules of structures that were set up in advance.

Introduction of WordPress and Movable Type

WordPress
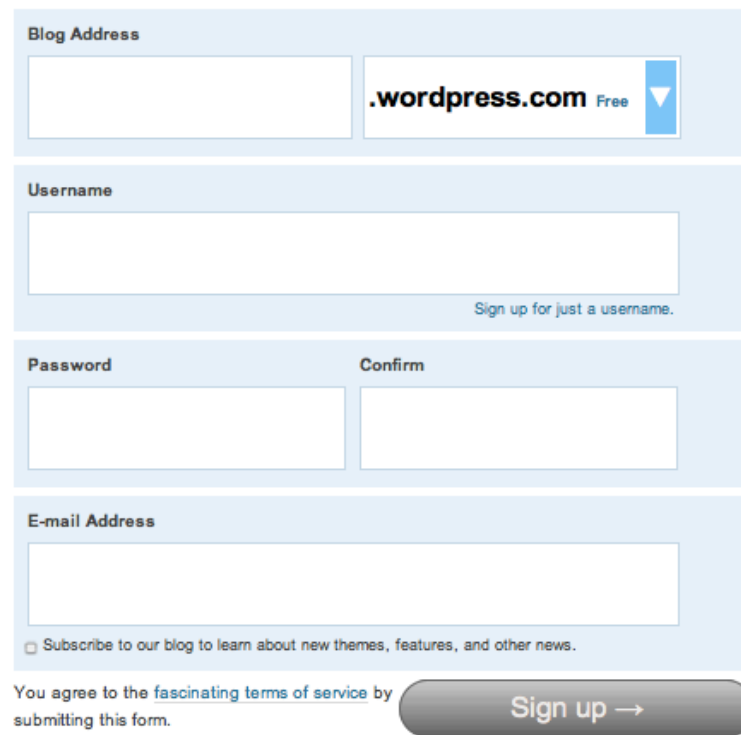
WordPress is a personal publishing platform that was built on platforms with PHP and MySQL, and licensed under GPL. As an open source content management system, WordPress has many features including a plug-in architecture and a template system, as

well as other features such as user management and profiles, easy installation and upgrade, and internationalization and localization.

Matt Mullenweg and Mike Little were co-founders of the WordPress project. The core contributing developers include Ryan Boren, Mark Jaquith, Matt Mullenweg, Andrew Ozz, and Peter Westwood [6]. The community, including a group of WP Testers who had early access to nightly builds, beta versions, and release candidates, also contributed to the development of WordPress. WordPress is closely associated with Automattic, the company founded by Matt Mullenweg. Automattic manages the servers, the distribution and the management of the product. They also operate WordPress.com, which is a hosted version of WordPress. If users of WordPress don't have their own server or don't have web development background, they could sign up on WordPress.com and get an account which would give they access to their own WordPress blog (Figure 1).

Figure 1 - The sign up page at WordPress.com

WordPress.org, on the other hand, is the official home of the WordPress software, from which users can download the latest version (WordPress 3.1, at the time of this writing) of WordPress, plugins, themes, and get access to documentation, which is also known as the Codex [7]

Movable Type

Movable Type is a weblog publishing software developed by Ben Trott and Mena Trott,. Ben and Mena Trott are also co-founders of Six Apart, the company behind Movable Type and the TypePad hosting service. Notable features of Movable Type include the ability to host multiple weblogs and standalone content pages, manage files, user roles, templates, tags, categories, and trackback links [8].

The first version of Movable Type (Version 1.0) was released on October 8th, 2001. Movable Type has a free edition under the GPLv2 license. In addition to the free version, users can purchase support and commercial, education, or nonprofit licenses, which come with support contracts, author limits, and unlimited blogs.

Movable Type is written in Perl, and supports storage of the weblog's content and associated data within MySQL natively. It stores posts, comments, and the like in a database just like WordPress does, but it creates static HTML pages from that data. This arrangement makes Movable Type a little leaner when serving up content, but publishing a post can take more time because each index page needs to be rebuilt. Movable Type has added an option to use a dynamic system, but by default, it publishes static pages.

Comparison of WordPress and Movable Type

Although started almost two years later than Movable Type, WordPress is arguably the most popular blog publishing system nowadays. WordPress 3.0 was downloaded over 30 million times in the first 7 months after its release [9], and the latest version (3.1) had been downloaded over 300,000 times in the first 24 hours of its release [10]. WordPress has been listed as the #2 "Top Overall Skills in Demand" by Elance.com in their Online Employment Report [11], while the top 5 includes PHP, WordPress, Article Writing, HTML, and Graphic Design.

Figure 2 – Logo of WordPress

Figure 3 – Logo of Movable Type
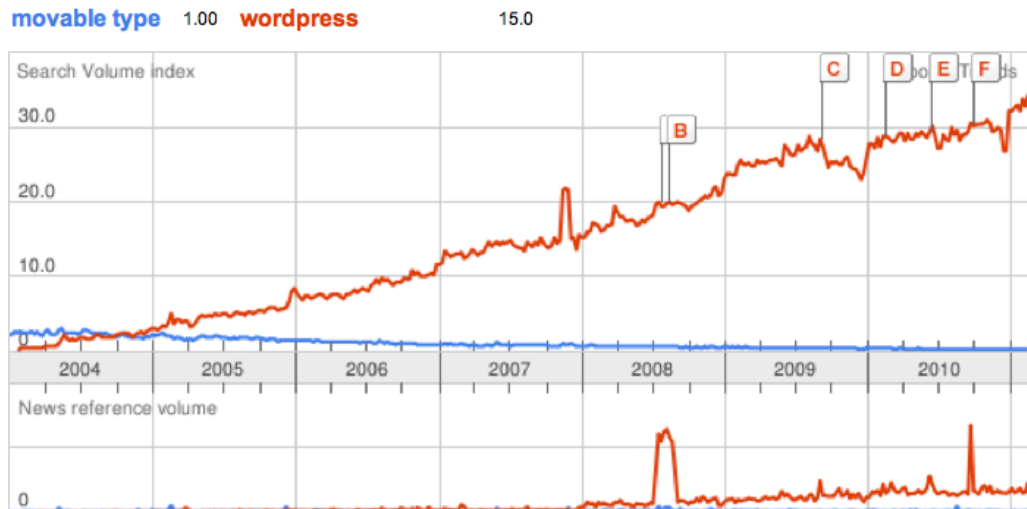
Figure 4 shows the traffic trends for both WordPress and Movable Type. The data is based on the average search traffic of the terms ("WordPress" and "Movable Type"). In this graph, the numbers on top of the graph (WordPress 15.0, Movable Type 1.0) are corresponding to the average worldwide traffic for searches of these two terms. From these graphs we can tell that WordPress has been searched far more often than Movable Type, which suggests that WordPress is more popular than Movable Type.

A WordPress app hits the iPhone fashionably late
CNET News - Jul 23 2008

B Movable Type, Wordpress becoming social platforms
CNET News - Aug 12 2008

C WordPress blogs at risk from worm
ZDNet - Sep 8 2009

D WordPress.com Outage Blamed On Router
PC Magazine - Feb 19 2010

E Will Wordpress jam Drupal with Thelonius
ZDNet - Jun 18 2010

F Microsoft Live Spaces Moves to WordPress: An FAQ
San Francisco Chronicle - Sep 28 2010

Figure 4 – Comparison of average worldwide traffic between WordPress and Movable Type from Google Trends

Movable Type used to be a popular blogging system, and has been used for personal and enterprise blogs. However, as we can see in Figure 4, it has been exceeded by WordPress in mid 2004, and traffic has been decreasing since then. Question has been raised about why the popularity of WordPress and Movable Type are heading two different directions. Many people have tried to answer this question [12] from several different perspectives, and among these answers, the following factors are remarkably consistent:

- Movable Type's license changed in 2004;

- WordPress is open source, while Movable Type was not very open in the beginning;

- WordPress is written in PHP, while Movable Type is written in Perl.

This section will take these factors into account, and compare WordPress and Movable Type from different point of views.

1. Ease of Use

1) System Requirements

WordPress requires PHP version 4.3 or greater, and MySQL 4.1.2 or greater. It runs on any web server that supports PHP and MySQL, but Apache and Nginx are generally recommended. The end user needs to use FTP or SFTP protocols to upload content (text files, images, etc.) to the server, therefore the web hosting provider has to support these protocols.

Movable Type also requires a web server to run it, however, since it is written in Perl, the selected web server has to be able to execute CGI scripts written in Perl. Starting from Movable Type 5, it dropped support for database systems such as SQLite and PostgreSQL, and MySQL 5.0 or greater is recommended. For Perl, it requires 5.8.1 or greater.

2) Installation

WordPress provides the latest version of the software as a compressed package, using either zip or tar file. The documentation site has a "Famous 5-Mintue Install" instruction to guide the installation of the system. For users with minimum technical background, with the help of this instruction, they could easily have an up and running website setup very quickly.

As mentioned in the previous section, Movable Type requires CGI support on the web server. The Common Gateway Interface (CGI) is a standard that defines how web server software can delegate the generation of web pages to a stand-alone application, an executable file. Web hosting service providers tend to configure their CGI support on the web server differently, which makes it difficult to have a standardized install instruction. Taking information security into consideration, system administrators develop many limitations enforced by the web server, such as only some directories on users' web servers can run CGI scripts.

Besides the limitations of CGI scripts, the installation of Movable Type also requires more technical expertise and more configuration changes, because Perl applications have a different deployment model from PHP applications.

3) User Interface

The "Dashboard" (Figure 5), which is the administration panel in WordPress, is very well designed and easy to use. The simplicity of using the dashboard to perform regular tasks is one of the reasons that users choose WordPress instead of Movable Type. By default, the dashboard provides users with plenty of useful information at a glance, such as recent posts, recent comments, incoming links, plugin updates, etc. The left side admin panel is very clear and easy to navigate to do jobs such as adding new articles, managing visitors' comments, and changing WordPress settings.
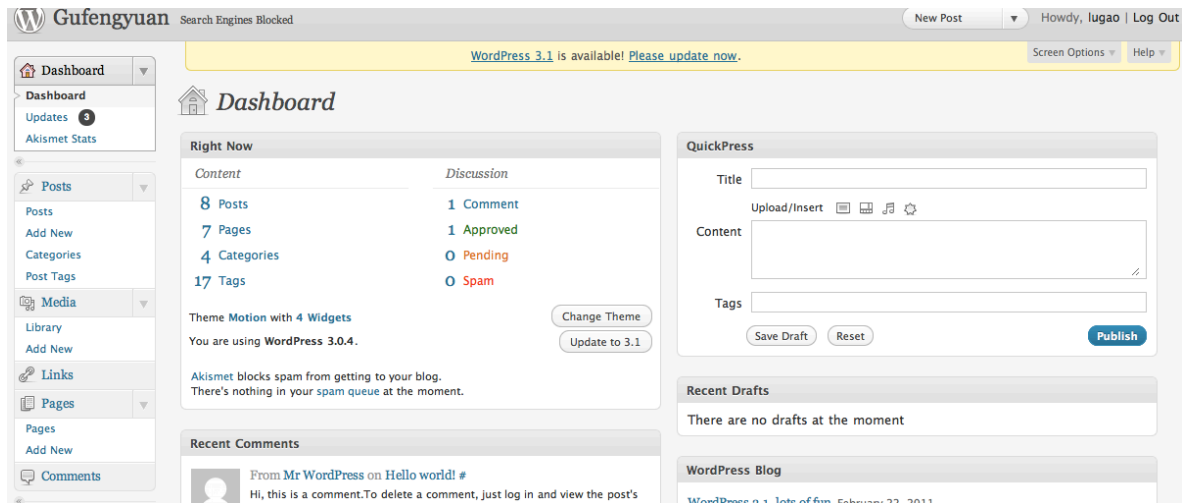
Figure 5 – Dashboard of WordPress

Movable Type also has a clean and easy to understand user interface. Similar to WordPress, Movable Type also presents users with a contextually oriented menu system in the left sidebar, which contains nine main groups: Entries, Pages, Assets, Tags, Comments, Members, Design, Settings, and Tools. These groups integrate very smoothly and are a pleasure to use (Figure 6).
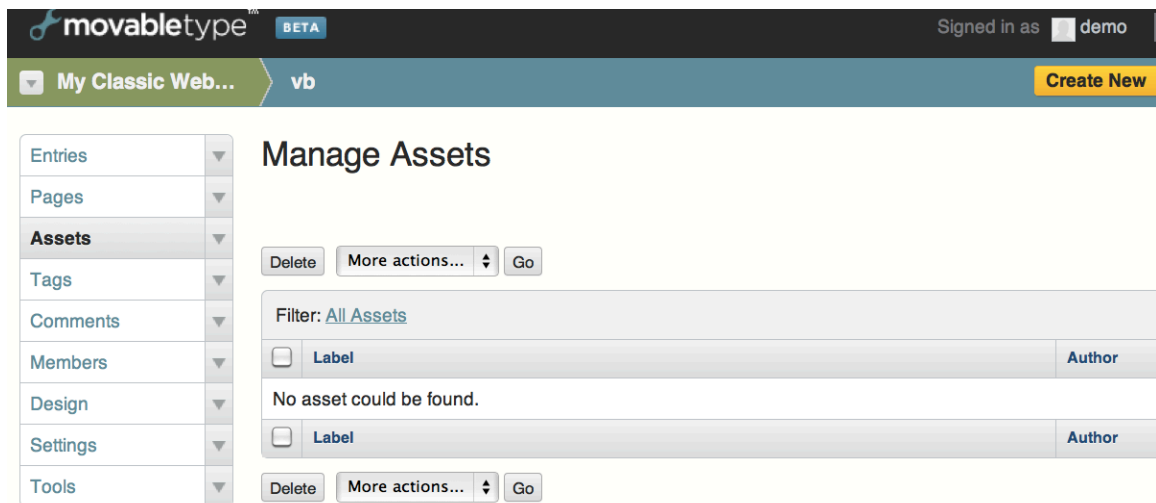

Figure 6 – Setting Panel of Movable Type

4) Content Management

Typical tasks that are performed using a content management system include adding new web pages, adding new posts (news article, image gallery, video clips, etc.), and so on. Simplicity is one of the most important factors that need to be considered while performing these tasks.

Both WordPress and Movable Type provide features to allow end users to easily create and manage content. WordPress mainly has two types of content: post and page. A post is what is normally called "blog", while a page is generally used to show personal bio info, company info, and others. Both posts and pages can contain text, images, and embedded rich media such as audio and video. Using WordPress, users can choose to list posts chronologically (Figure 7), and choose to archive, search, and sort posts.

Both systems also have templates for users to easily create new web pages. Templates in Movable Type are very easy to find and to edit, and the template module (Figure 8) allows users who don't have much technical expertise to easily create new page templates.
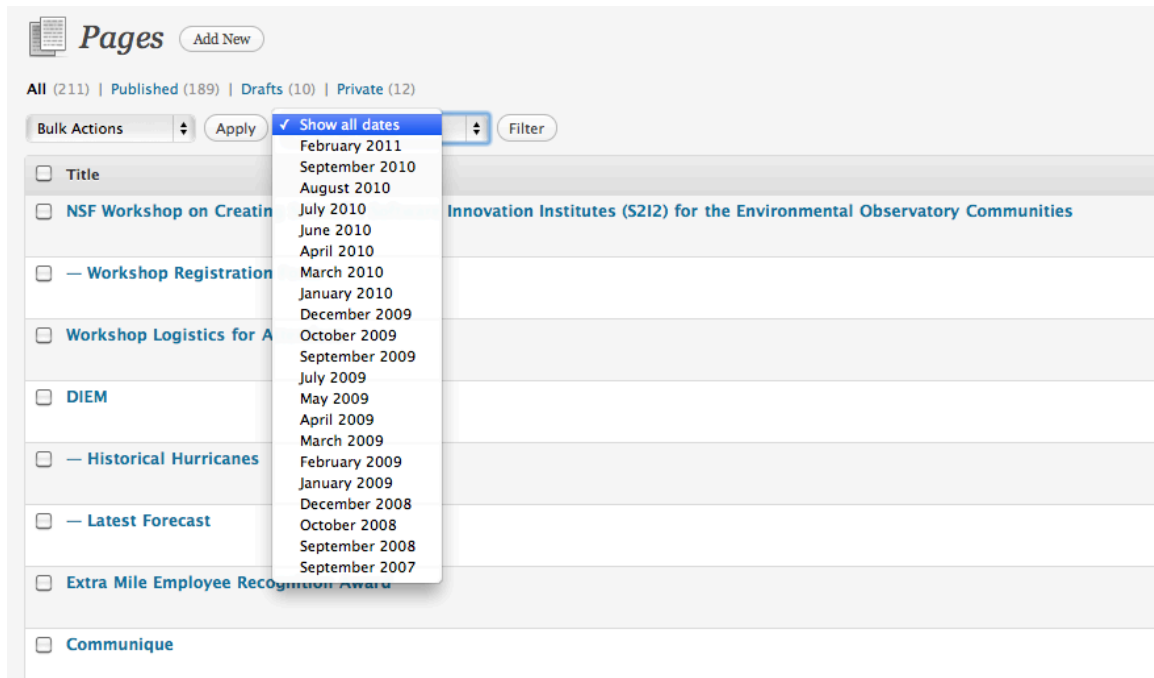
Figure 7 - Dates filter for pages

Figure 8 – Template Modules of Movable Type

Templates in WordPress retrieve information from the MySQL database and generate

HTML code that is sent to the web browser. WordPress allows users to define as few or

as many templates as they need. Each template could be configured to use under specific situations, such as blog posts, people directory, etc. Compared to Movable Type, WordPress does a better job with basic template customization (Figure 9).

Another advantage of WordPress regarding content management is the widgets. In WordPress, users can add widgets to sidebar, footer, header, and even the body of a page. For example, a Calendar widget could be added to the sidebar to show popular events in a calendar view (Figure 10).
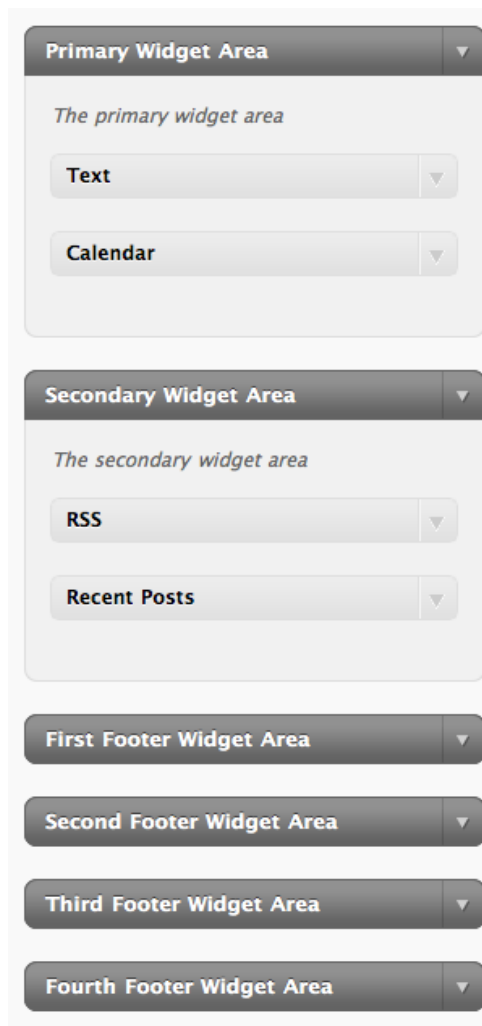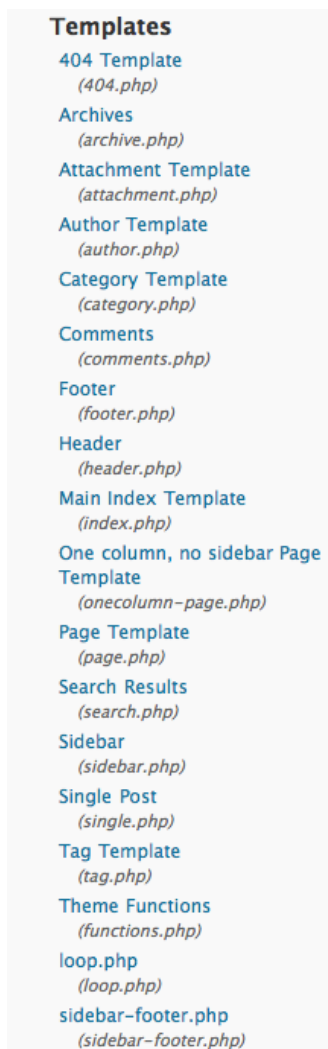
Figure 9 – Template of WordPress　　　　*Figure 10 – Sidebar widget of WordPress*

For basic page and post editing, WordPress provides two modes: Visual and HTML. In Visual mode (Figure 11), user can use a WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) editor to add or update content, which is very convenient for regular users. For advanced users with HTML expertise, the HTML editor (Figure 12) will be very helpful to customize the page easily and efficiently.
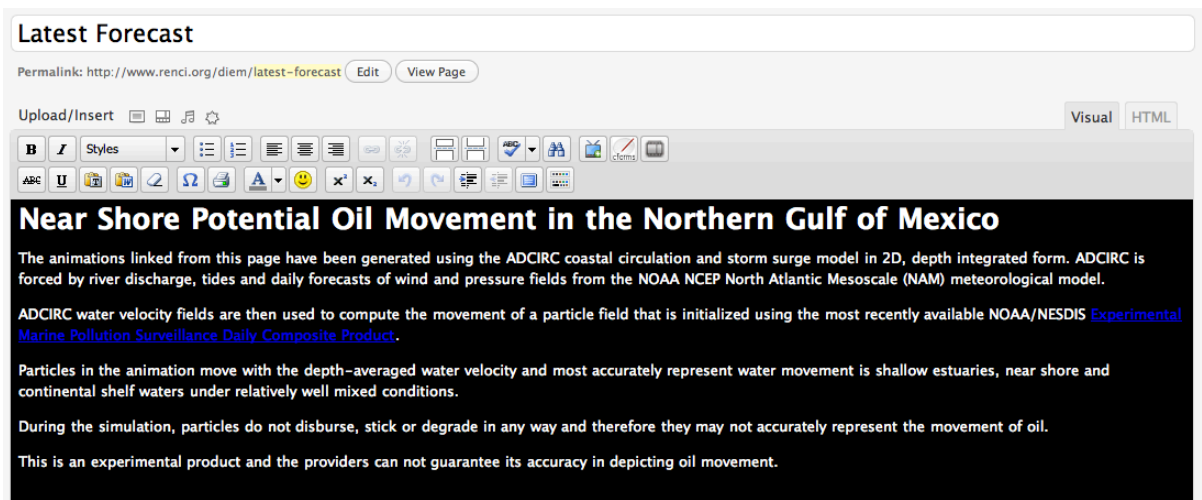
Figure 11 – Visual style of Page Edition
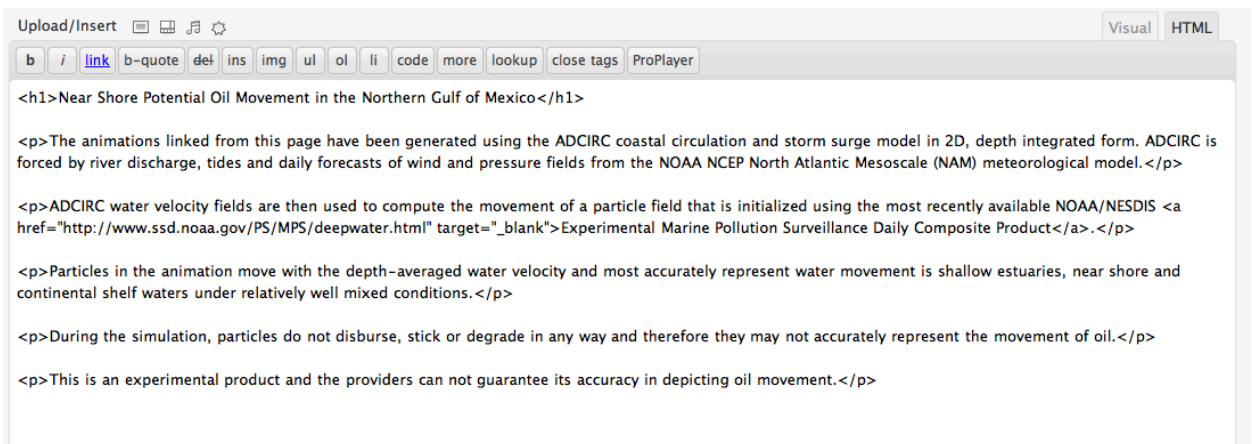
Figure 12 – HTML style of Page Edition

Movable Type has similar functionality like this, but is not quite as easy to use. Movable break out the templates into different pages – Index Templates, Archive Templates and System Templates, which make the setting panel very clean and tidy (Figure 13). However, it has no clear hierarchical template list on the menu bar (Figure 14). When users are editing certain template, they cannot see the clear templates list and understand which one is being edited right now. And once they click "Template" button on the Menu bar, the page will take them back to "Manage Website Template" page again, rather than the template category.

Figure 13 - Organization and Structure of Movable Type's Templates
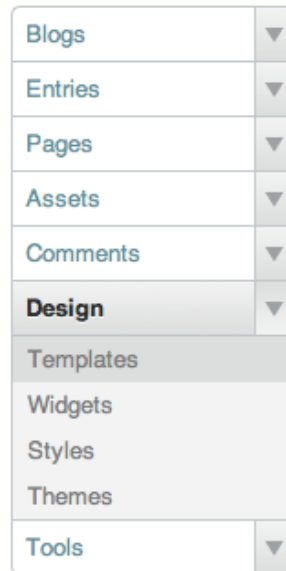
Figure 14 – Menu bar of Movable Type

To sum up, WordPress and Movable Type have similar features, and the both of their user interfaces are easy to understand and easy to use. However, from installation, theme customization, to content management, WordPress is relatively easier to use comparing to Movable Type.

2. Programming Language

As discussed in previous sections, WordPress is written in PHP, while Movable Type is written in Perl.

PHP and Perl are both scripting languages that could be used for web development, as well as system administration scripting. However, there are some major differences between these two languages: Learning Curve, Speed and Efficiency, Portability.

PHP is generally considered easier to learn from the web development point of view. It's easier to learn than C, Python, Java, and most other programming languages used in web development. In PHP, web pages are constructed like HTML pages, with standard HTML markup. PHP code is inserted into the page and executed when the page is requested. This makes it very fast to code web pages and fast to deploy a new site, thus speeding up Web development. Conversely, Perl scripts are run as stand-alone programs and create HTML pages when the script is run.

"An important code management technique for programmers is separating code from data. This allows us to make changes to the code or data without affecting the other." [14]
PHP uses tags such as "<?php" and "?>" to indicate there is PHP code embedded the HTML, therefore it is very easy to modify the code or data without affecting each other. However, Perl programmers use print statements to generate HTML, which makes it more difficult, if not impossible, to separate code and HTML.
One of the philosophies of Perl is "There's more than one way to do it", which means for a given problem, there are always several ways to write the program to solve it. Therefore, the portability of Perl programs is very poor, which means the code that was written by a programmer may be very hard to understand by another, if possible at all.
Because of these differences, PHP is very popular in the web development field. Figure 15 shows the comparison of PHP and Perl in Google Trends, from which we can determine that PHP has been searched about four times more in the past several years.

Figure 15 – Comparison of PHP and Perl based on Google Trends

The differences between PHP and Perl have a big impact on the popularity of WordPress and Movable Type. First of all, since PHP is easier to learn and use, most users tend to choose WordPress because it takes less time to become an experienced website developer or designer than using Movable Type. Second of all, PHP has a very big community, and so does WordPress, therefore a large number of developers contribute to the development of PHP and WordPress, while the user base of Perl and Movable Type is relatively small. Lastly, most web hosting service providers support PHP by default, while few of the support Perl, therefore users will have to install and configure themselves, if possible (not all web hosting companies allow server level customization).

3. Ecosystem

1) Open Source License

WordPress was released under the GPLv2 license from the Free Software Foundation, and has remained open source ever since then, and has become a popular open source blogging and publishing platform. The 2009 Open Source CMS Market Share Report reached the conclusion that WordPress enjoyed the greatest brand strength of any open source content management systems [13], and the huge open source community can be one very crucial reason that why WordPress grows so rapidly. All of the technical support and contribution in the long run to WordPress is the most valuable asset.

Movable Type was first released as free software in 2001. In 2004, Six Apart announced that they would be making changes to the Movable Type licensing, which mostly places restrictions on its use without paying a licensing fee. This action triggered lots of criticisms from its users, and eventually made some users migrate to the then-new open source blogging tool WordPress. Although Six Apart quickly responded to the criticisms and restored the ability of Movable Type to create unlimited weblogs at all licensing levels, and finally relicensed Movable Type as open source software under the license of GNU GPL, users had already been lost.

2) WordPress.com and TypePad

WordPress.com hosts WordPress blogs for free. Hosting a blog on WordPress.com frees users from having to get their own hosting space and making sure that the users' web server meets the system requirements that WordPress needs to run. The team behind WordPress.com takes care of all the back-end stuff, such as patching servers and

upgrading software. But The URL of the blog will be something like www.
blogname.wordpress.com. WordPress.com offers some advanced features such as domain
mapping, which allows user to point any domain to a blog hosted on WordPress.com.
However, if using the free server service of WorPress.com, given the nature of
WordPress.com, users have no access to their blog's code. They can't modify the way
their theme looks without paying a little extra, also can't upload their own custom theme,
or upload their own plug-ins.

Before WordPress 3.0 was released, WordPress.com actually ran a special version of the
system called WordPress Multi-User (WPMU), which allows multiple users to operate a
hosted blog in one system. Automattic gains profit by offering upgrades and occasional
advertisements on WordPress.com. Figure 16 shows the homepage of WordPress.com.
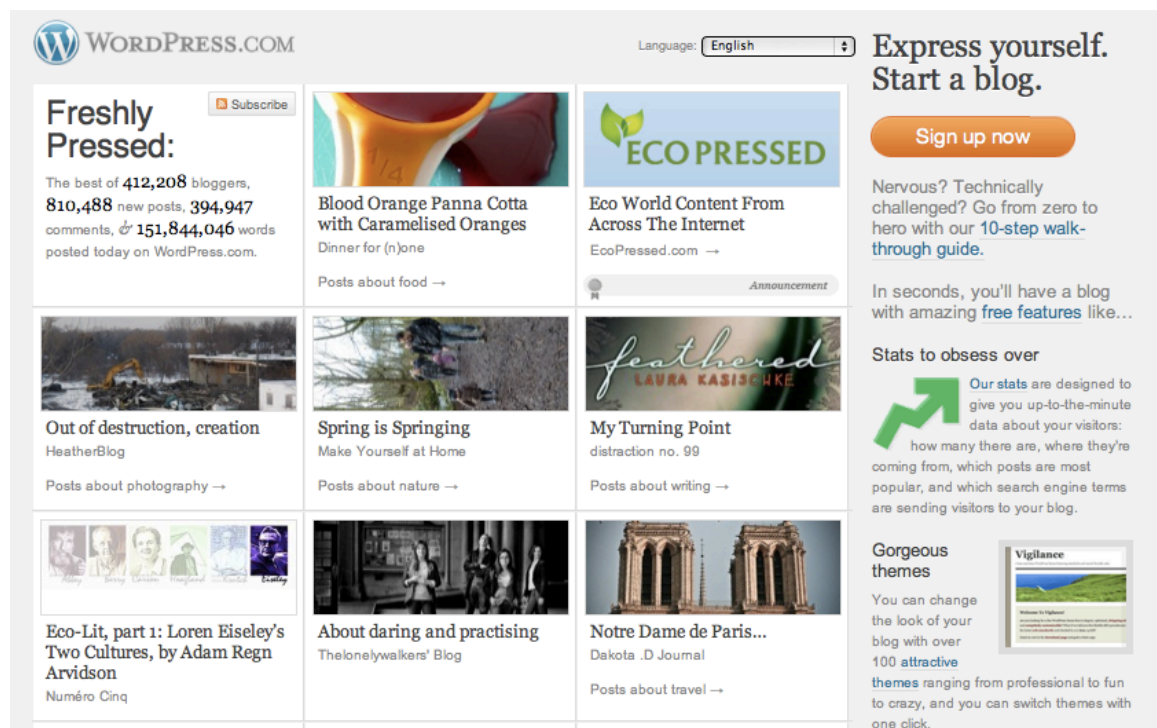
Figure 16 - Homepage of WordPress.com

Six Apart also has its own blogging service, TypePad, which was originally launched in October 2003 (Figure 17). TypePad is based on the Movable Type platform and shares technology with Movable Type such as templates and APIs.
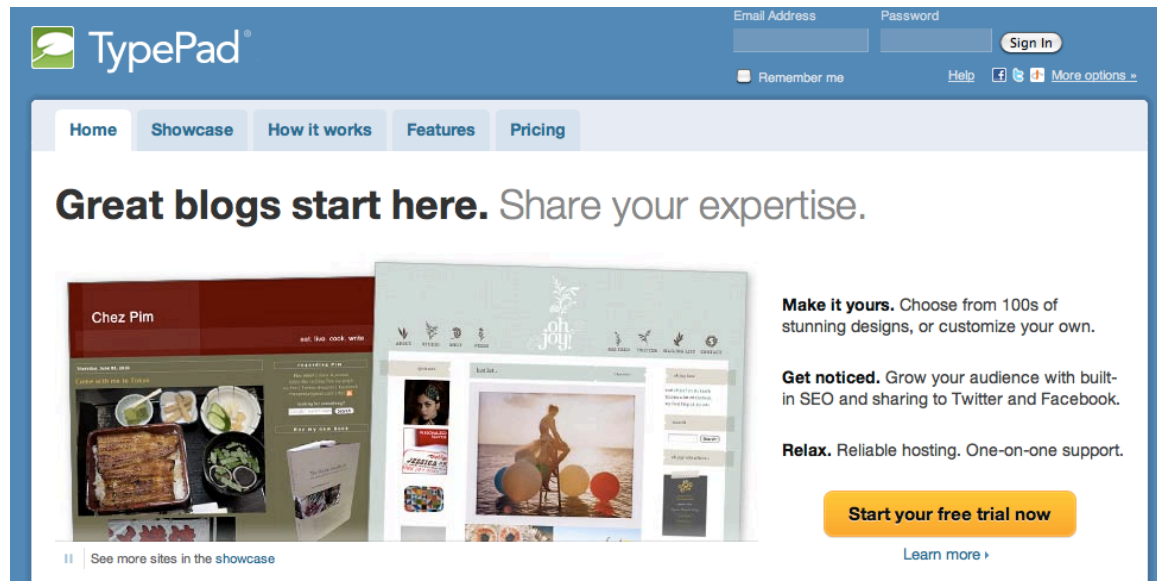
Figure 17 – TypePad homepage

Although the services provided by WordPress.com and TypePad are somewhat similar, traffic to these two sites are dramatically different. Figure 18 shows the search trends for both sites from Google Trends, and Figure 19 shows a comparison of the 3-month global Alexa.com traffic for the 2 sites, from which we can tell that WordPress is ranked at 20, while TypePad is only at 198.
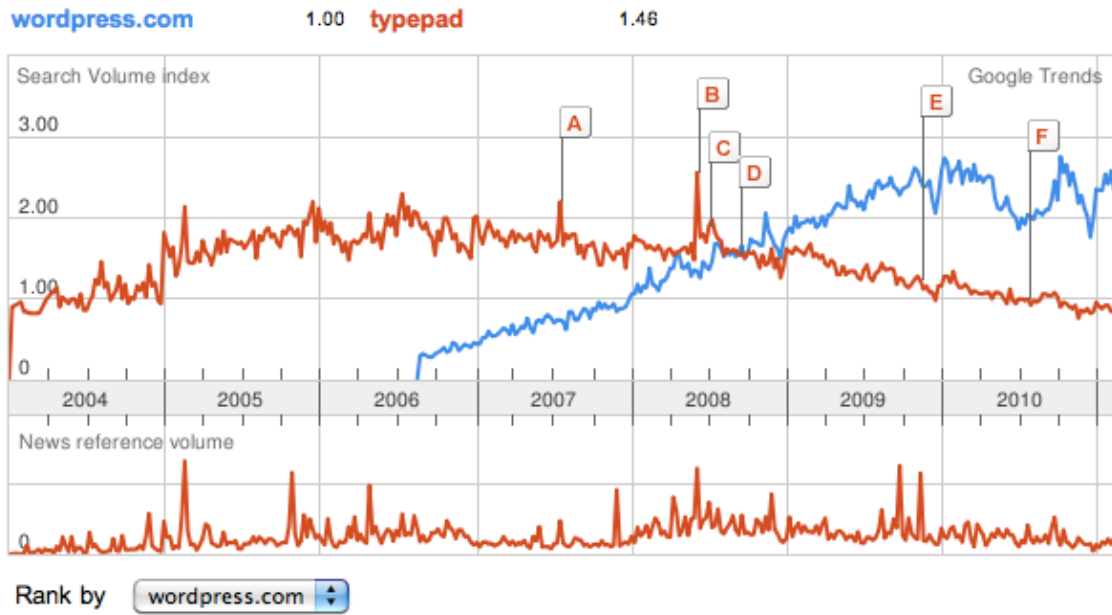
Figure 18 – Comparison between WordPress.com and Typepad on Google Trends
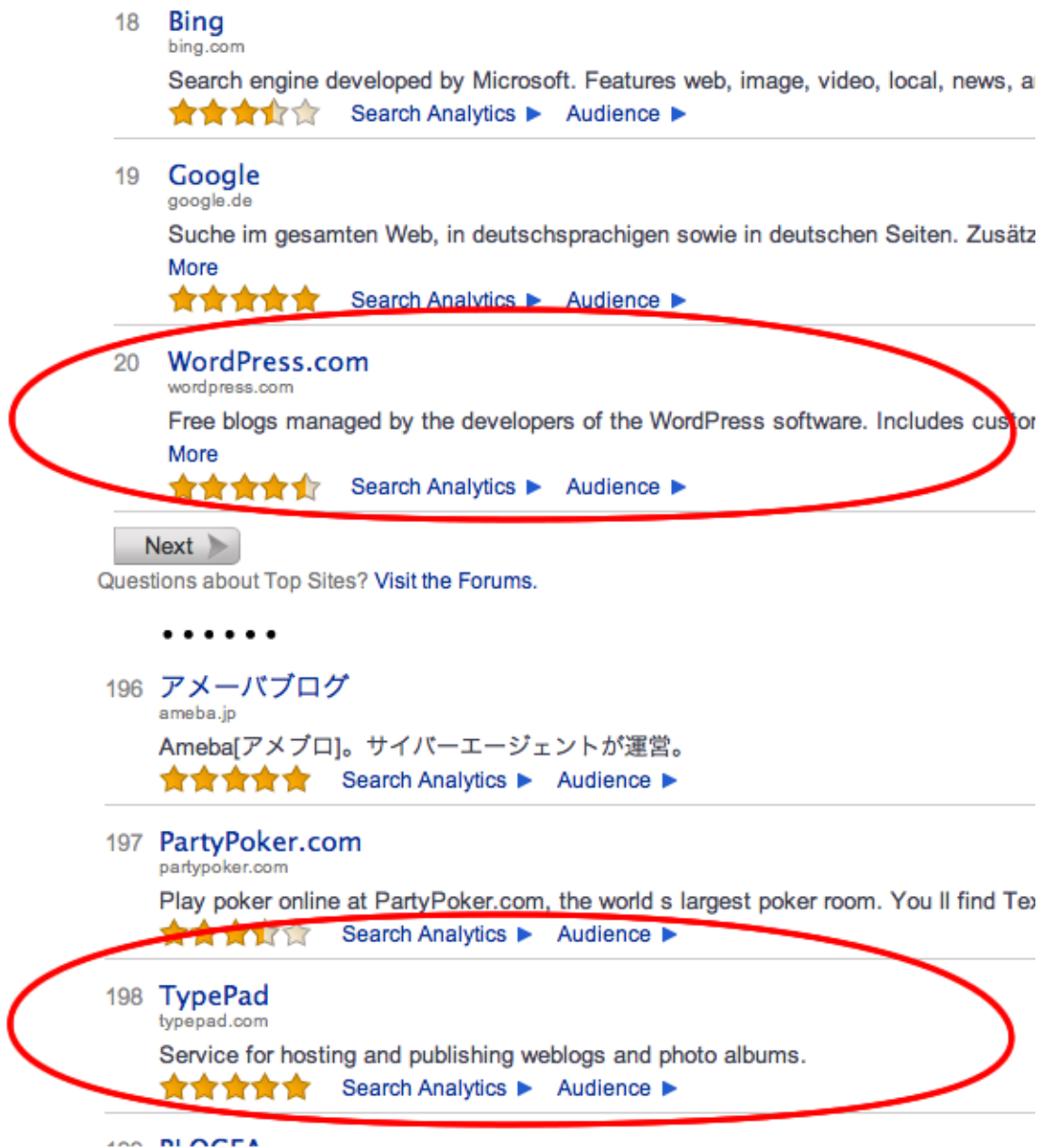
Figure 19 – Comparison between WordPress.com and Typepad at Alexa website rating

3) Community

As an open source project, WordPress has a very well organized team of developers.

There are mainly three types of developers: Lead Developer, Contributing Developer,

and Developer. Figure 20 shows a screenshot of the list of Lead Developers and Contributing Developers. This structure is very useful for keeping the community developers motivated in trying to contribute more to the development of the WordPress system.

Figure 20 – Developers at WordPress open source community

Everything on the WordPress.org site, "from the documentation to the code it self, was created by and for the community". Besides the core developers, there is also a mature community that makes tremendous contributions to the WordPress system. Users of WordPress could connect with the open source community by discussing in WordPress forums, subscribing to the mailing list, or attending the WordCamp, which is a

conference that is focused on everything WordPress. Figure 21 shows a list of active members in the WordPress open source community.

Aaron Campbell (aaroncampbell), Adam Backstrom (adambackstrom), John Ford (aldenta), Alex Dunae (alexdunae), Alex King (alexkingorg), Amanda French (amandafrench), Will Anderson (anderswc), Andrea Rennick (andrea_r), Andrew Ozz (azaozz), Andy Skelton (andy/skeltoac), Andy Blackwell (andyblackwell), André Renaut (arena), Andrei Vereha (avereha), Azizur Rahman (azizur), Barry Abrahamson (barry), Mohammad Jangda (batmoo), Beau Lebens (beaulebens), Ben Ward (benward), Matthew G. Richmond (bigdawggi), Rowan Rodrik van der Molen (bigsmoke), Glenn Ansley (blepoxp), blt4, bobbyblade, Boone B. Gorges (boonebgorges), Brian Colinger (briancolinger), Brian Layman (brianlayman), Caesar Schinas (caesarsgrunt), Ben Casey (casben79), Chip Bennett (chipbennett), Chris Sfanos, Chris Jean (chrisbliss18), Marco Cimmino (cimmo), Scott Reilly (coffee2code), Dylan Kuhn (cyberhobo), Darren Meehan (darrenmeehan), Dion Hulse (dd32), Dean Robinson (deanjrobinson), Demetris Kikizas, Δημήτρης Κίκιζας (demetris), Denis-de-Bernardy, djzone, Доктор Бро (doktorbro), Donal MacArthur (donalmacarthur), Dougal Campbell (dougal), Dre Armeda (dremeda), Jon Cave (duck_), Doug Provencio (dougwrites), Edward Hevlund (edward mindreantre), Einar Egilsson (einare), Eric Mann (ericmann), Austin Matzko (filosofo), Gil Rutkowski (flashingcursor), foofy, Francesco Laffi (francescolaffi), Gary Cao (garyc40), Justin Tadlock (greenshady), Reuben Gunday (greuben), hakre, Hui Chen (huichen), Ben Huson (husobj), Matt Thomas (iammattthomas), Ian Stewart (iandstewart), indie-ulf, Jacob Santos (jacobsantos), Jakub Míšek (jakub.misek), James Collins (jamescollins), Jane Wells (jane/janeforshort), jayjdk, Jason Penney (jczorkmid), Jeff Farthing (jfarthing84), Josh Kearney (jk0), joelhardi, John Blackbourn (johnbillion), John James Jacoby (johnjamesjacoby/jjj), John O'Nolan (johnonolan), John Bloch (JohnPBloch), Joost de Valk (joostdevalk/yoast), Aaron Jorbin (jorbin), Joseph Scott (josephscott), Justin Rainbow, Kapeel Sable (kapeels), Adam Harley (kawauso), Jorge Bernal (koke), Daryl Koopersmith (koopersmith), Lance Willett (lancewillett), Lutz Schroeer (latz), Lew Ayotte (layotte), linguasite, Lloyd Budd (lloydbudd), loushou, mailnew2ster, mako09, Mark Jaquith (markjaquith), Mark McWilliams (markmcwilliams), MattyRob, Mauro Gentile, Michael Adams (mdawaffe), Chris Meller (mellertime), Michael Fields (mfields), MichaelH, Mike Schinkel (mikeschinkel), Robert Chapin (miqrogroove), Michael "Mitcho" Erlewine (mitchoyoshitaka), David McFarlane (mrmist), mrwok, John Havlik (mtekk), Martin Widmann (mwidmann), Andrew Nacin (nacin), Nikolay Bachiyski (nbachiyski), Nathan Rice

Figure 21 – A list of names of people in the WordPress open source community

Although Six Apart relicensed Movable Type and made it open source, the community around Movable Type has not been well developed. One of the reasons is the use of Perl programming language to write Movable Type and its plugins and themes, because compared to PHP, Perl developers are rare, especially for Perl web developers. Another reason is probably because Six Apart has not been very open since the beginning.

The difference of open source community between WordPress and Movable Type has been apparent and obvious. The open source community of WordPress is proved to be a very successful business eco-environment and it has been trying its best to unite the

strength and effort to develop the community, on the contrary, some decisions that Movable Type made have weakened its community.

4) Customization and Extension

Both WordPress and Movable Type are customizable and extendable by using themes and adding plugins. A theme is a preset package that contains codes, scripts, style sheets, and images that are used to control the general looking of a web site. A plugin, on the other hand, is used to extend the system to do things that are not possible with the core system.

"One of the core philosophies of WordPress is to keep the core code as light and fast as possible but to provide a rich framework for the huge community to expand what WordPress can do". This is listed on the WordPress official website, and has been realized by the great selection of plugins, themes, and other extensions to the core WordPress system. Currently 13,412 plugins, and 1,330 themes are listed on the site and are freely available to all users. Some of them has been downloaded hundreds of thousands times, for example, Contact Form 7, which is a simple plugin that allows site administrators to easily add a contact form to a website, has been downloaded over 3 million times. Figure 22 and figure 23 shows the free theme directory and plugin directory on WordPress.org.

Figure 22 - Free theme directory on WordPress.org

Figure 23 - *Free plugin directory on WordPress.org*

Besides the free themes and plugins listed on WordPress.org that are contributed by the community, many third party companies also play an important role in the WordPress ecosystem. These companies provide WordPress consulting, premium theme designing, paid website building, and other services. Themes and plugins that are created by third party companies normally have more features and have better quality than free ones. WooThemes (Figure 24) and Premium WordPress (Figure 25) are two examples of such companies:
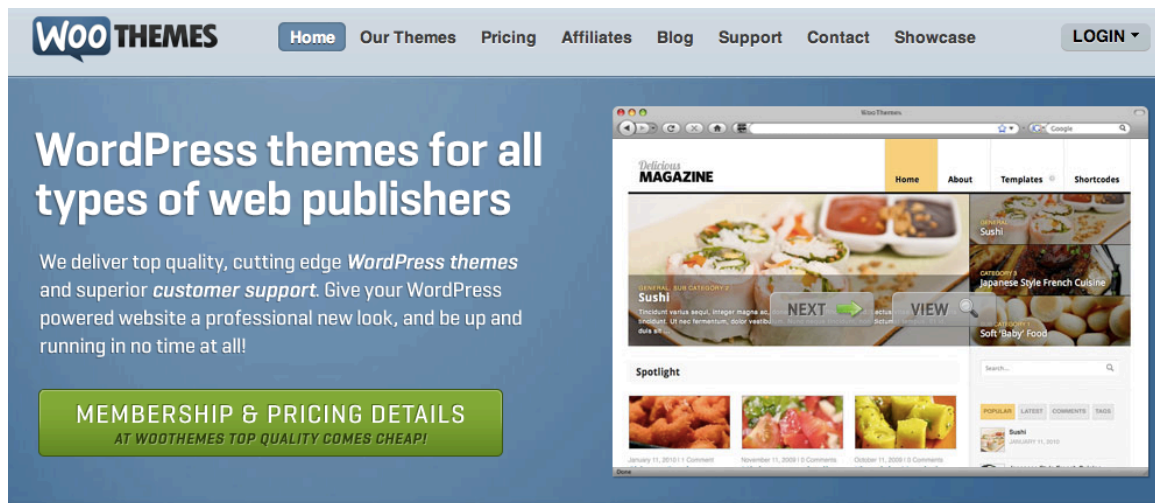
Figure 24 - WooThemes

Figure 25 - Best Premium WordPress Themes Collection

Movable Type, on the other hand, doesn't have a big selection of themes and plugins. No themes could be found on Movable Type's official website. There is a library of plugins for Movable Type on the site (Figure 26), however the total number is only about 1,000 (no exact number can be found on the site), which is relatively small compare to

WordPress' 13,412. Moreover, third party service providers for Movable Type are very limited.

Figure 26 - Movable plugin directory

Conclusion

This paper discussed the factors that made WordPress win a large number of users and becoming a successful weblog publishing system, while Movable Type has been losing users despite the fact that it is a great product. The study focused on comparing the ease of use, the programming language used to develop the system, as well as the ecosystem generated by the community. Reasons for WordPress' success over Movable Type include:

1) Ease of Use: WordPress is easier to setup and maintain, users don't need lots of technical expertise.

2) Programming Language: WordPress uses PHP, which has a larger user base and better support by web hosting companies.

3) Ecosystem: the openness of WordPress is better, and it has a strong and mature community that contributes to the development of the system.

It should be noted that this paper is not a thorough comparison of the two content management systems, and studies in other areas could be conducted, for example the business model. This paper also does not guide people to choose a CMS as blogging or web publishing, because each of platform, both open source CMS and commercial CMS i

ncluding WordPress and Movable Type, all have their strengths. However, the results from the comparison did provide insights in maintaining an open source project, as well as contributing to the development of an open source system.

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